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SUBJECT: IRAQI KURDISTAN REGION MEDIA SUMMARY--
MARCH 5, 2007

11. (U) This is a Regional Reconstruction Team (RRT) cable.

US Military Apologizes to Families of Fallen Peshmerga

12. (U) The major Kurdish media covered a meeting between US Army representative Colonel Smith and Kurdish representatives Mustafa Chawrash (PUK Leadership) and Mahmoud Singari (representative of Jalal Talabani) to apologize for the deaths of 8 Peshmerga who were killed in a friendly fire incident outside of Mosul last month. Colonel Smith promised that compensation payments would be made to the families of the fallen Peshmerga.

Ministry of Social Affairs Delivers Assistance to Poor Families

13. (U) The PUK-run Kurdistan Nwe newspaper covered a report by the General Social Monitoring Office of the KRG Ministry of Social Affairs which states that 12,699 poor families in the Kurdistan Region are currently receiving social assistance payments from KRG. The Ministry is sponsoring 118 orphan children who have no family to live with.

Commentaries:

14. (U) KDP-run Khabat newspaper covered discussion by Iraqi National Assembly of the Article 140 process on Al Arabia TV's program From Iraq. Hasan Al Shimmari (Al Shi'a bloc), discussed the Iraqi constitution, describing federal systems as the most successful political system in the world. Al Shimmari continued, "according to Article 140 of the Iraqi constitution, the referendum should be implemented next summer." In the same show Hamid Majid Musa, the head of Iraqi Communist Party from Al-Iraqia bloc, said "the Communist party has been calling for a federal system for Iraq for 17 years."

15. (U) This media summary is prepared by Public Diplomacy Assistant Tawar Rasheed.